

My Procedure of The Operation of a Large Format Camera

Working up a good and comfortable procedure, when in the field, or studio, is a good way to not make mistakes, that are often costly and very upsetting. *(Nothing is worst than a missed photographic moment to a photographer. Often it is the only time that one will get the exposure one wants at the time of visualizing "the moment".)* Every LF photographer must find their own and not vary from this procedure of operation.

My procedure for the operation of a Large Format camera is:

After selecting a good subject, and or landscape area to capture an image....

- 1.) Set up the tripod.
- 2.) Remove camera from traveling box.
- 3.) Securely attach camera to the tripod, and attached the cable release to the lens.
- 4.) Using a Spot-Meter, I Take light and shadow readings of a selected area. *(I often take five readings - and according to the Zone System - average the exposure.)* - I write down these settings in a hand written Notebook.
- 5.) Open the f-Stop to FULL OPEN, Lock Open the Shutter, and focus on subject(s) - and make needed swing - tilt - fall and rise - If Need Be.
- 6.) According to the average spot meter reading, I set the f-Stop and Shutter Speed. - And Close the Shutter.
- 7.) Taking a film holder from the box, or bag, I insert the holder into the camera.
- 8.) With the dark slide in place, I operate the shutter three or four times, to check for proper operation.
- 9.) I now remove the dark slide and operate the shutter.
- 10) Replace the dark slide and remove from the camera. *(Most of the time with making paper negatives, I make two exposures of the same area for the first two exposures. = Later on, when in the darkroom, the first is a test of the developer - If I Have A New Mix.)*
- 11). Replace all equipment into carrying boxes, and move on to the next area of interest.
((Repeat 1 though 11 of the above throughout the day of shooting.))

Thank you for reading - James R. Kyle, Photographer - Saint Louis, Missouri, U.S. of A